

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/551,466	TAKAHASHI, SADAO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Mehrdad Dastouri	2623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to October 13, 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-24, 27-52 and 55-68 (Renumbered 1-64).
3. The drawings filed on April 17, 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date October 15, 2004
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's amendment filed September 13, 2004, has been entered and made of record.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The instant invention recites binarization apparatus comprising a block division unit that divides a multi-valued image into blocks and a binarization threshold value setting unit that sets a binarization threshold value to be used when binarizing the multi-valued image. A low luminance value removal unit inputs luminance values of each pixel forming the selected object blocks from among luminance values output by luminance value output unit, removes luminance values that are lower than the low luminance threshold value set by low luminance threshold value setting unit, and outputs only those luminance values which exceed the low luminance threshold value. A mean luminance value calculator calculates mean luminance values using luminance values from which luminance values that do not reach the low luminance threshold value in a block have been removed. The low luminance threshold value setting unit sets the low luminance threshold value based on mean luminance values of blocks adjacent to the object blocks, and the binarization threshold value setting unit sets the binarization threshold values of the object blocks based on mean luminance values of the blocks.

The instant invention, in other embodiments, further recites an interpolation block setting unit for setting interpolation blocks which cover pixels extending over two or more adjacent object blocks from among object blocks selected by the object block selection unit.

The features identified, in combination, are neither discussed nor suggested by the prior arts of record.

3. Claims 1-24, 27-52 and 55-68 are allowed.
4. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mehrdad Dastouri whose telephone number is (703) 305-2438. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Amelia Au can be reached on (703) 308-6604. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Mehrdad Dastouri
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2623
November 17, 2004

MEHRDAD DASTOURI
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Mehrdad Dastouri